



*Jacob Luckenbach Moored in San Francisco  
Courtesy San Francisco Maritime National Historic Park  
Negative No. P82-019A0739*

[Jacob Luckenbach](#)'s history began back in 1944 as the C3 cargo ship *Sea Robin*. The United States was at war and in need of vessels to transport troops and cargo to foreign ports to support the war effort. *Sea Robin*'s keel was laid on 01 October 1943 later being launched on 29 February 1944 at the [Ingalls Shipbuilding Corp](#) at Pascagoula, Mississippi. The steamship was assigned hull No. 411. Just four months earlier the [USS Burleigh](#) (APA-95), assigned hull No. 406 slipped down the ways at the Ingalls shipyard in Pascagoula. The combat loaded transport [USS Burleigh](#) went on to receive one battle star for her service in WWII and was later sold to Matson Navigation Co. in 1947 and renamed [Hawaiian Pilot](#). Before being sold off to Oceanic Steamship Company in 1961 and renamed *Sonoma*, and later to Pacific Far East Lines in 1970, she would meet for one last time with her sister ship [Jacob Luckenbach](#) off the Golden Gate near San Francisco.



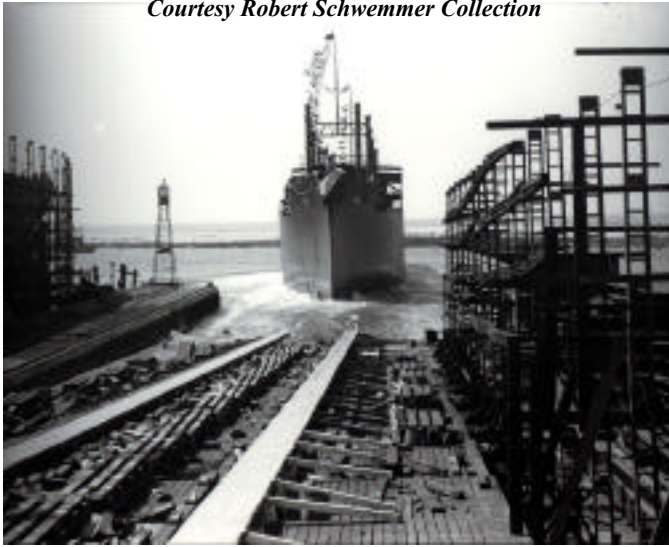
*Sea Robin Prior to Launching  
Courtesy Northrop Grumman Ship Systems*



[Ingalls Shipyard Corp.](#) was established in 1938 at Pascagoula, Mississippi and is currently named [Northrop Grumman Ship Systems](#). The shipyard's long record of shipbuilding include: vessels for the U.S. Navy, U.S. Coast Guard, international navies, and all types of commercial vessels.

The shipyard is located on the Pascagoula River at the Mississippi Sound providing deepwater access to the Gulf of Mexico.

*Courtesy Robert Schwemmer Collection*



*Sea Robin Launched*

*Courtesy Northrop Grumman Ship Systems*

Beginning on 20 May, 16 June and 10 July 1945 the *Sea Robin* completed three successive voyages to Le Havre with the second voyage departing Hampton Roads. Arriving New York on 28 July *Sea Robin* made five round trips to Marseilles. These voyages were completed on 20 August, 13 September (departed Boston), 8 October, 1 November, and 2 December 1945. She returned to New York Christmas Eve and departed 24 January 1946 for Le Havre, making two more round trips on 23 February and 31 March of that year. One trip followed to Naples returning to New York on 6 June 1946. She was later scheduled to go to the United Kingdom in the interest of British National Progress. (Roland)

### *Sea Robin*

Upon completion of her construction she was operated by United States Lines Co.. *Sea Robin* departed Pascagoula and arrived at the port of New York for the first overseas assignment. On 14 October 1944 she departed for Marseilles, Oran and Gibraltar. On 17 November 1944 she arrived back at New York, later departing on 3 January 1945 for The Solent, Le Havre and Southampton, arriving again at New York on 4 February 1945. She repeated the same voyage between 19 February and 1 April of 1945. Departing New York the same month the *Sea Robin* made another voyage to Le Havre and Southampton returning to New York in May.



*Sea Robin Underway*

*Courtesy Northrop Grumman Ship Systems*



*Crewman Aboard the Jacob Luckenbach in 1948*

*Courtesy Robert Schwemmer Collection*

*Sea Robin* ownership transferred from the War Shipping Administration to the Luckenbach Steamship Co. with her name being officially changed to [\*Jacob Luckenbach\*](#) on 23 December 1947. The Luckenbach Steamship Co. registered the C3 freighter's home-port as New York, NY. The Certificate of Registry dated 1947, indicates her past names were *Sea Robin* and British *Sea Robin* confirming her ownership transferred to British interests before returning to the United States.



American Hull Insurance Syndicate insured the hulls and cargoes of both the [\*Jacob Luckenbach\*](#) and [\*Hawaiian Pilot\*](#). It was the highest aggregate claims paid by the company in the 1950s, totaling \$2,021,798. The Syndicate just three years earlier paid out a \$329,584 claim for the *Mary Luckenbach* which collided with the U.S. Military Sea Transport Service hospital ship *Benevolence* 4 miles off the Golden Gate. (Mitchell)

The [\*Jacob Luckenbach\*](#) is a great example of a vessel built for transatlantic WWII troop and cargo transport, and later in her career being introduced into the U.S. Merchant trade where she once again carried military cargoes for the Korean War.

To learn more about why shipwrecks offer a window into our historic past, go to NOAA's National Marine Sanctuary [West Coast Shipwreck Database](#).



*Hawaiian Pilot* Bow Damage After the Collision  
Courtesy Robert Schwemmer Collection

#### **Publications Referenced:**

Charles, Roland W., Troopships of World War II, The Army Transportation Association, 1947

Mitchell, C. Bradford, Touching The Adventures & Perils – A Semicentennial History, American Hull Insurance Syndicate, New York 1970.

#### **Related Links**

*Jacob Luckenbach* <http://www.cinms.nos.noaa.gov/shipwreck/dbase/gfmns/jacobluckenbach.html>

Gulf Of The Farallones National Marine Sanctuary <http://www.gfmns.nos.noaa.gov/>

GFMNS Shipwreck Database <http://www.cinms.nos.noaa.gov/shipwreck/gfmns.html>

Channel Islands National Marine Sanctuary <http://www.cinms.nos.noaa.gov>

*Jacob Luckenbach* Incident News [http://www.incidentnews.gov/incidents/incident\\_9.htm](http://www.incidentnews.gov/incidents/incident_9.htm)

*Hawaiian Pilot* <http://www.uscg.mil/hq/g-m/moa/colliscas.htm>

Ingalls Ship Building – Northrop Grumman Ship Systems <http://www.ingalls.com/>

USS *Burleigh* <http://www.hazegray.org/danfs/amphib/apa95.htm>

West Coast Shipwreck Database <http://www.cinms.nos.noaa.gov/shipwreck/shiphome.html>